



United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS  
NATIONAL INTERAGENCY FIRE CENTER  
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June 5, 2013

Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors, All Regions  
Attention: Forestry/Fire Management

From: Director, Branch of Wildland Fire Management

Subject: Bureau of Indian Affairs Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Final Guidance

From 2001 through 2012, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has accomplished over a million acres of Hazardous Fuels Reduction (HFR) treatments. However, the effects of the hazardous fuels treatment program in reducing wildfire impacts have not been adequately documented. By reporting fuels treatment effectiveness, the BIA and the Interagency community will have data to show how fuels treatments contribute to modifying fire behavior, aid in wildfire management, and may reduce wildfire costs or negative impacts.

This message updates the September 25, 2012 BIA Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Interim Guidance and serves as a reminder of the importance of documenting interactions of wildfires and fuels treatments. An online tool, Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Monitoring (FTEM), has been developed to assist all of the Department of Interior (DOI) Bureaus and the Forest Service in documenting HFR treatment effectiveness and provides a single, interagency, national source to document the interaction of wildfires and fuels treatments. This system provides a simple and easy way for users to enter information about fire weather, fuels, and supporting documentation (e.g., photos, maps) inside and outside treated areas for comparison. This data will be available for use at various levels of the DOI Bureaus and the Forest Service to:

- Answer congressional and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) questions about the effectiveness of the HFR program.
- Establish baseline data to use when making future HFR program decisions.
- Document what we have learned from wildfire events to adjust future HFR treatment prescriptions.
- Verify whether HFR treatments have changed fire behavior.
- Share documentation with Tribal Councils, the Tribal public, and congressional representatives to demonstrate HFR program success.
- Positively impact future budget allocations.

Instructions for accessing the system are found in the attached User Guide for Fuel Treatment Effectiveness v5.1. The FTEM information is intended to supplement the National Fire Plan Reporting and Operating System (NFPORS) and Wildland Fire Management Information (WFMI) Fire Reporting data. Within the FTEM tool, all corresponding Project and Treatment data must be consistent with NFPORS and wildfire information must be consistent with the data recorded in the WFMI system. Wildfire/fuels treatment interactions must be reported in FTEM within 90 days of a wildfire intersecting a fuels treatment.

The FTEM data will be a primary source for the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) 5 Year Monitoring Report, a joint effort between the Department of Interior and the USDA Forest Service. The HFRA 5 Year Monitoring Report addresses the question of HFR treatments meeting the objectives they were designed to achieve. Therefore, regions will ensure that, **at a minimum, all wildfires in the last five years (2008-2012) that have intersected with fuels treatments be reported in the FTEM online system.** However, if units would like to include earlier wildfire / fuels treatment intersections, wildfires can be added back to 2003. Regional Fire Ecologists have received direction to assist Agencies and Tribes in updating the FTEM database with past wildfires.

For questions related to the FTEM system, contact William Grauel, National Fire Ecologist, at 208-387-5234, or Kim Kelly Fire Ecologist, Northwest Region, at 503-231-2115.

Attachments